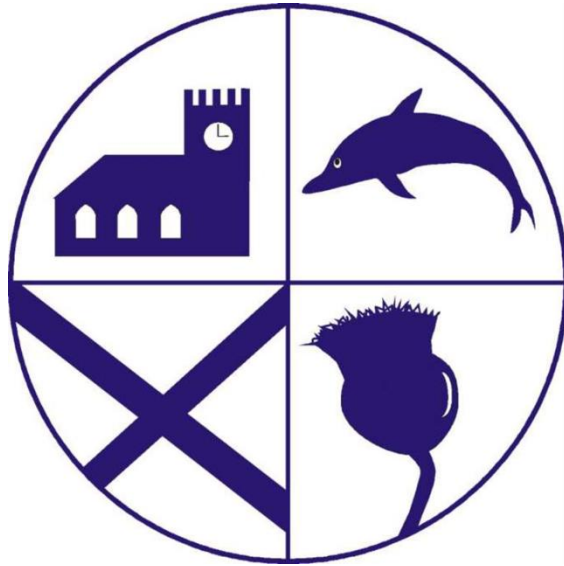


# **St. Andrew's CE (VA) Junior School**



## **Assessment without Levels**

## **Information Leaflet for Parents**

## Assessment at St. Andrew's Junior School

### Levels in Schools

Until September 2015, the National Curriculum levels of attainment were expected benchmarks for each year group. Like all schools, we tracked children's attainment throughout their school life using levels.

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Average level	2a/3c	3b	3a/4c	4b

### Changes from September 2015

From last September, the government removed levels in schools (apart from Year 2 and year 6) although we kept the system throughout last year to maintain continuity between the year groups. In addition to this, the government introduced a new National Curriculum in September 2014 which has also affected how we teach and assess children. We have now changed and developed our assessment practices in response to these government reforms.

### Why the change?

The government felt that the system of levels was too complicated and confusing. By removing the levels, schools are now able to give a clearer indication of whether children are at the expected level for their age. Schools have been given the freedom to design their own tracking systems to say where children are in relation to the prescribed age expected content for each year group. This will be benchmarked against the national tests at the end of KS2.

The new National Curriculum became statutory in September 2014. Expectations across all year groups have been raised and new, more challenging tests are being developed nationally for use at the end of KS2 (Year 6) from this year.

The new National Curriculum is a 'Mastery' curriculum. Mastery is the child's ability to apply their learning across the curriculum. This means that children must MASTER the objectives taught, rather than just be taught them. It is important to note that expectations have increased with the new National Curriculum. A shift in

content means that many objectives for English and Maths in the New National Curriculum have been moved down to the year group below. This means that children now need to master a more difficult curriculum.

### How will we be assessing children now?

We will be assessing children against the new National Curriculum objectives and using new 'language' to report to parents on how well their children are achieving these new objectives. We are using our electronic data system to ensure that our teacher assessments accurately reflect national standards.

Each year group will have a BAND, so Year 3 = Band 3, Year 4 = Band 4, Year 5 = Band 5 and Y6 =Band 6.

Each Year Band is then broken down into 6 steps.

The minimum expected progress will be 6 Steps of progress over a year.

### Steps

The six steps are:

- beginning (b)
- beginning + (b+)
- working within (w)
- working within + (w+)
- secure (s)
- secure + (s+)

The three broader sections may be thought of in these terms -

Beginning	Your child is working towards the objectives for this year group for this subject.
Working within	Your child has achieved about two thirds of the objectives for this year group for this subject.
Secure	Your child has achieved all/ the vast majority of the objectives for this year group for this subject. They have met their age related expectation.

For children to be working at age related expectation, they would need to reach the secure (s) step at the end of the appropriate year.

Children who have reached Secure + have attained a more thorough and wide ranging grasp of the content and concepts. This does not mean that they can be taught from the objectives in the year group above.

### What happens if children achieve the year group objectives early in the year?

When children have achieved objectives, they will then be given opportunities to deepen their understanding and apply these skills in a range of contexts. If it is assessed that children have thoroughly 'mastered' the objectives from their own year group (**this will be rare** -the objectives are very challenging!), we will begin teaching children curriculum content from the next year group.

### What happens if my child finds the year group objectives too challenging?

Although the expectation is that the vast majority of pupils will be working towards their year group objectives as a national year group standard, some children may benefit by working with the previous years' National Curriculum objectives. Teachers are committed to finding ways to support children to access learning linked to their year group, but where there are clear gaps in skills or learning which has been missed, it may be necessary to recover earlier year group objectives.

### Benefits of this new system of assessment

- Better feedback can be given to children based more directly on what they have been learning
- Children are given more opportunity to practise, apply and 'master' skills and knowledge in lessons
- Reporting children's progress is clearer for parents and directly linked to year group expectations and what children can and cannot do.
- Higher expectations of curriculum and assessment means a higher level of knowledge and skill for children in each year group

### National Tests

Children take the following National Assessments as they move through school.

Year 6	Maths arithmetic test Maths tests	Children undertake a range of tests to assess whether they have met
--------	--------------------------------------	---

	<p>(application of knowledge) Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Tests Reading test Writing assessment (teacher assessment)</p>	<p>the year group standard. With the exception of writing, these are externally marked. Our understanding is that children will be measured as working towards the expected standard, working at the expected standard or working at greater depth within the expected standard. NB there will be no more Level 6 tests for children in Year 6.</p>
--	--	---